WHO endorses public health care
Geneva meeting shortened to fight new influenza virus

LEIPZIG, Germany/GENEVA, Switzerland: The improvement of primary health care and pandemic influenza preparedness are two of the main resolutions adopted at this year’s World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

Last week, the 195 Member States adopted a final plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property, which includes an agreed list of stakeholders who will be involved in the process, as well as a time frame and indicators by which to monitor progress. The plan of action aims, amongst other things, to reduce exclusion and social disparities in health-care systems worldwide and to promote public policy reforms in order to integrate health into all public sectors.

The WHO World Health Report 2008 found striking inequalities in health outcomes and the access to care. Globally, annual government expenditure on health varies from as little as US$20 per person to well over US$6,000. For 5.6 billion people in low- and middle-income countries, more than half of all health-care expenditure is through out-of-pocket payments.

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She called for close monitoring of the virus as cases begin to appear in the Southern Hemisphere, where the new virus will have opportunity to inter-mingle with other currently circulating influenza viruses as the season at winter influenza epidemics begin.

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WHO officials during the high-level consultation on influenza A(H1N1). (DTI/Photo Cédric Vincensini, WHO)

Czechs seek expertise in Japan
Scientists from the Masaryk University in Brno in the Czech Republic have signed a cooperation agreement with the Faculty of Dentistry at the Tokyo Medical and Dental University in Japan to co-develop new materials for use in dentistry.

According to the Czech News Agency ČTK, the researchers will focus on special titanium alloys for dental implants and determine whether the materials have a negative impact on general health. In addition, the two universities have announced that they will arrange the exchange of students on a regular basis.

Tokyo Medical and Dental University is the largest public dental school in Japan, with over 5,000 students. The university hospital treats 19,000 patients per year.